(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto ; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the proposals framed by the New York based Kashmir Study Group were circulated to Indian Government which gave favourable response to the same as mentioned in the above newsitem ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA); (a) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the news-item published in the Hindustan Times dated 19th March, 2000.

(b) Government does not take cognizance of or react to studies or reports prepared by a group of private individuals in other country.

(c) No, Sir. The State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan. India is committed to a resolution of all outstanding issues with Pakistan through peaceful discussions as envisaged in the Simla Agreement.

Charging of Property Tax from Embassies in New Delhi

2960. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH "SURYA" : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL. AFFAIRS be pleased to state ;

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the NDMC for charging property tax from the Embassies in New Delhi area ;

(b) if so. Government's response thereto ;

(c) whether Indian missions are paying such taxes in other countries ; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In accordance with Article 23 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to which India is a signatory, the sending State and the Head of Mission is exempted from payment of all national, regional or municipal dues and taxes in respect of all the premises of the mission whether owned or leased other than such as represent payment for specific services rendered.

(c) and (d) the requisite information are not kept in a centralised method in Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.